

*Moderator:* Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining us on our Teamsters' coronavirus update call for Teamster affiliates and staff. To get us started today, General Secretary Treasurer, Ken Hall. Mister Hall?

*Ken Hall:* Thank you, and good afternoon, brothers and sisters. Unfortunately, General President Hoffa can't be with us on a call today. As you know, a lot's happened since we spoke last, and shockingly, most of it's not connected to pandemic. The death of George Floyd and numerous other African Americans has focused the nation's attention on the persistent racism that continues to plague our country. Unfortunately, we can't all get together to march and protest because of the threat of Covid-19, but we can work together to address systemic racism in other ways.

This problem didn't arise overnight, and it won't be fixed overnight. Marches and protests are important, but don't get me wrong, what really comes after the protest is gonna be the real tests. Protests demand change. Then, it's time to make change. And the Teamsters will be part of that change.

Our union's in a unique position to facilitate dialogue about how to tackle this problem. We represent law enforcement officers. We also represent members who've been directly affected by the violence in systemic racism. And today, you'll be hearing from Marcus King, who's the head of our Human Rights and Diversity Committee, to get his thoughts. You'll also hear from Carl Bailey, the head of our Law Enforcement League.

Frank and honest conversations with our law enforcement members must be a part of the change. Vilification of all law enforcement won't fix the problem any more than the denial of the racism and violence we've seen evidence of every day. As sad and shocking as some of the events of the past two weeks are, I hope that we can now begin to make changes, implement reforms, and ensure that everyone has a seat at the table. I'm always proud to be a Teamster, but especially in times like these.

Of course, the threat posed by Covid-19 is still with us, and in some parts of the country, the threat is rising. LaMont Byrd, our Director of Safety and Health, will be joining the call to update us on the latest information on how to stay safe. You can always check out the resources available on our website for more in-depth information about the virus and how to work safely. Even in these trying times, our members, local unions, joint counsels, and the

international continue to work. Vice President, Steve Vairma, along with Iain Gold will be on to discuss the food supply chain Day of Action.

There's a lot going on and a lot to cover today. So, with that, I'm now gonna turn the call over to my friend, François Laporte.

*François: Laporte:* Thank you very much, General Secretary Treasurer Hall. And my brothers and sisters from across North America – good afternoon. This week, I will start my report by recognizing the tremendous efforts and the energy deployed the Canadian local union officers' business agent and office staff to keep our union functioning since March. They deserve our recognition, them, for their dedication. Also, I will repeat myself this week again.

My two colleagues – International Vice President, Craig McGinnis, and Stan Hennessy – have been extremely efficient *[Break in audio]*, been very efficient managing the crisis in *[Break in audio]* respective region. *[Inaudible to break in audio]* their collaboration. With regards to the crisis in Canada, let's start by talking about the border. The border are still closed between our two countries, except for essential travelers and transport of essential goods. There is numerous rumors out there that the border will remain closed til the end of July, and announcement is expected soon so, we don't know if the border will open on June 21st. There is lots of doubt about that.

With regards to our economy, reopening is on its way, and depending on the region, different industry are back. Like in the United States, the tourism – hotel, restaurants – are deeply affected by the crisis. Teamsters represent thousands of workers in those sector, and we do not expect the situation back to normal before several months. Canada's unemployment rates have reached a record high of 13.7 percent. The previous record was established in December 1982, and it was 13.1.

However, one encouraging note – our economy added almost 300 jobs in May with business reopening. So, we have high unemployment rates, but it's coming back slowly. With regards to the Covid itself, as of today, 7,897 Canadians have died of complications due to Covid-19. The most affected regions of Canada are the province of Quebec and the province of Ontario. 97 percent of the people who died were living in nursing home and/or in long-term care center. The spread of Covid is still going on.

Every day, thousands of new cases are registered, and hundreds of dead are reported. And one interesting note – and it's important to realize – that Covid-19 cases are now on the raise along the young adults. So, this is something that we cannot take lightly. Teamsters Canada membership – a great majority of our members are essential workers. Some industry and local union have been more affected than others, particularly the one in the hotel, restaurant, sports, entertainment, movie, and airline.

Major loss are expected – more than \$100 billion – for these sector of our economy. Government financial assistance will be needed to assure the future of these industry and the future of the job of our members. On a positive note, just to mention that the government of British Columbia has approve a restart of the movie industry. Now, because of the border being closed, it will slow down their restart, however, the Canadian movie director, **Laurie** \_\_\_\_\_, is monitoring the situation. So, that concludes my report, and I will hand it over to LaMont Byrd, the IBT Safety and Health Director. Thank you.

*LaMont Byrd:*

Thank you, President Laporte. Nationally, there are over 1.9 million confirmed positive cases of Covid-19 at our last check – which was this morning – and there's been 111,751 deaths that are attributed to complications from Covid-19. Overall, in the US, cases are trending downward, but concerns remain about there being spikes of new cases and the threat of a second wave with the virus as all US states are in varying stages of reopening. We're seeing the number of hospitalizations and new cases spiking in several states that are in advanced stages of reopening. Further adding to the equation is the widespread protesting that is occurring nationwide.

In most instances, based on what I've seen on television, participants, more often than not, were not maintaining recommended physical distancing, and this morning, there were reports of quite a few confirmed positive cases among the National Guard personnel who were at some of the protests. So, we know that there's a probability that there was some level of viral transmission among other attendees. To that end, the CDC experts are recommending that all who attended protests be tested for Covid-19. I say this today to remind you that we're not past this pandemic and we need to take special care to continue to employ the CDC guidance on physical distancing, enhanced handwashing, and the use of hand sanitizers using PPE when appropriate and

wearing a mask. There's increased interest in using contact tracing as an added tool in our arsenal to defend us from this virus.

This has been an important tool that's been successfully used in other countries. So, to kind of give you a quick summary of what contact tracing is, it means it's the tracing and monitoring the contacts of infected people to notify them that they've been exposed to the virus. It also involves advising the exposed individuals to quarantine, and to prevent additional transmission of the virus. It's a recommendation that they all be tested once they've been contacted, and to successfully conduct contact tracing, there will be a need for a large number of people to do the work. And what we're seeing – there's gonna be a great demand for people to be hired to do this type of work.

Much of the work can be done by electronic means such as telephone, and if you're interested in learning more about the contact tracing, you should check out the CDC website. They've got quite a bit of really good information there. And the Johns Hopkins University is now offering an online six-hour course on contact tracing free of charge. So, if you're interested, I suggested that you take a look at the Johns Hopkins University's website. They have a Covid link there and check that out. I plan on taking this six-hour course just to learn more about the process of contact tracing.

In terms of the Safety and Health Department's activities, we continue to diligently work to provide information to support our membership. We're moving forward in developing our online platform to provide Covid-19 and other safety and health-related training through our 12 regional training centers. We anticipate pilot testing via platform as soon as next week. We've developed an update fact sheet on Covid-19 as they relate to specific industry sectors, and we suggest that you take a look at 'em to get these updates. And we now have a fact sheet that details the most recent revisions to the hours-of-service regulations that affect our commercial driving members.

We're continuing to develop protocols for the safe return to work process, as many businesses are reopening. Again, I recommend that you visit the Teamster website for more information. Thank you for your time and I would now like to introduce Marcus King, Director of the Human Rights and Diversity Committee. Brother King.

*Marcus King:*

Thank you, LaMont Byrd. Thank you, Secretary Treasurer, Ken Hall, for being on the call today. I'd just like to read this statement. "The Teamsters Human Rights and Diversity Commission is outraged by the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. The killing of another unnamed black man unfortunately is not new in our society.

Another unprovoked and unwarranted murder. There are so many innocent lives – black men and women – killed by police officers who are supposed to protect and serve our communities. This list of senseless murders continue. Let us not forget Ahmed Aubrey, Breonna Taylor, Eric Gardner, Michael Brown, Walter Scott, and our own brother, Philando Castile, who was a Teamster – who is a Teamster – and hundreds of names not listed unknown. We know this plight of racism is not new.

400 plus years of discrimination, racial injustice, economic suffering, and the murder of black people continue. Our American history speaks for itself. This is not a black issue or a white issue or any group's issue. It is a human rights' issue. In this time of heightened tension and fear, we must stand together to fight racism, police brutality, in order to help protect and defend human rights and make a difference and abolish racism in our community and in the workplace.

Now, the Teamsters Union represent approximately 30,000 law enforcement officers. Most of the men and women who wear the uniform are supportive in protecting the laws, rights, and dignity of people. But, as we have seen with our own eyes – and some of us have experienced for our entire existence – some officers do not adhere to their commitment to protect and to serve, and instead, destroy and murder. We are calling on all of our Teamsters' brothers and sisters to stand together in solidarity to end racial injustice. Racism has always been a singular barrier to American unity, as well as to working class solidarity. And it must end.

We are not asking you to understand the protesting, the looting, or even the breaking of glass windows. We are asking you to just stop for 8 minutes and 46 seconds. Put your feet in the shoes of George Floyd or others. For many – for my white brothers and sisters who simply do not understand or are silently shaking their head for this to be a passing phase in the black community and choose to remain silent, your silence is a major part of the problem and does not help to work towards a productive solution. To do nothing in silence, you have taken the side of the oppressor.

It is not enough to punish those who have taken these black lives. It's not enough to simply identify them to be fired or prosecuted by the criminal justice system. We need systematic reform. Our deeply flawed criminal justice system makes it difficult to prosecute and convict. We must do the hard work to root out and destroy racism in America.

This work is necessary because these incidents do not happen in isolation. The Teamsters have long supported the civil rights movement and the fight to ensure equality for all citizens, regardless of race, color, creed, gender, or sexual orientation. However, our absence from this fight has been noticed over the past few weeks by members who are protesting and several social justice organizations. And so, the Teamsters must get back in the fight. These are an urgent need for action, and the HRDC is ready to take it on.

And I hope that you, your locals, are ready as well, to fight for justice. The Human Rights and Diversity Commission would like to be clear – we unequivocally stand with those who have answered the call to rally against injustice through protesting, demonstrations, community activism, and rallies, in all 50 states and a dozen countries around the globe. HRDC is collaborating with the Teamsters National Black Caucus and is moving ahead with plans to create comprehensive programs to acknowledge human rights issues that affect Teamsters at work and in the community. Stated in our mission, our aim is to create initiatives that promote social justice. We intend to focus on clear reforms and support on all issues involving diversity, equity, and inclusion. Please, stand with us as HRDC stands with Black Lives Matter.

Now, I want to thank our brother, Rick Hicks from Local 174 – Secretary Treasure – who took the time to tell his story how he had to deal with racism in his life, and we are asking for all of our brothers and sisters who have a story to tell to please, contact the Human Rights and Diversity Office so you can tell your story. We want to create a data bank so that, for our members who just don't understand, can hear from you. And you can go on our site and be able to see other Teamsters have gone through discrimination issues. Now, there has been many calls all over the country about what are the Teamsters doing, and it's my understanding that Teamsters have decided that, on this coming Saturday, June 13th, they want to show up in front of the building. And so, I'm asking,

if you plan to come or if you plan to go, please, wear your mask, please wear your gloves – please keep social distancing.

But if you're going to be there, I'm going to be there as well. So, I ask you to come and join us to be at the building – the headquarters – at the international. I thank you, Secretary Treasurer, Ken Hall, for giving me this opportunity and now, I want to pass it over to Carl Bailey, the law enforcement lead update."

*Carl Bailey:*

Thank you, Brother King, and thank you Secretary Treasurer, Ken Hall, for asking me to be on the call. I'd like to start by saying, as President Hoffa said in his statement, the Teamsters Union condemns the killing of George Floyd. The actions of officers who killed Mister Floyd dishonor the badge and are contrary to the high standards that the Teamsters law enforcement officers seek to uphold. We are proud that our union has always stood against racism and discrimination. As Brother King just said, Teamsters represents over 30,000 members in law enforcement who work hard, every day, to keep our community safe.

Our members in law enforcement are sworn to protect and serve all members of the public, and the Teamsters Union provides our law enforcement members with the best representation available. I want to say that we support peaceful protests, but I ask that please, don't judge the entire police profession by the actions of a few bad police officers. Having worked in law enforcement, I have represented members in law enforcement for many years. I have worked with and represented countless good police officers who work hard and sacrifice to protect and serve all people, regardless of race or nationality. This is our standard as Teamsters law enforcement officers.

We salute the many dedicated law enforcement officers for their hard work and dedication to service. While progress has been made, there is still much work to do to improve relations between law enforcement and communities of color. Our union, representing 1.4 million workers of all races and nationalities – including thousands in law enforcement – can play an important role. The Teamsters has always provided leadership for a more just society, and we will continue to do so at this historic moment. And, in closing, I was just asked this morning – as a labor leader and as a former law enforcement officer – if I would participate in a hearing with the Pennsylvania State Senate on police reform, and I'm proud to say, I'm gonna do so.

With that, I will close and again, thank the General Secretary Treasurer, Ken Hall, and all those who asked me to be on the call, and toss it along to Steve Vairma.

*Steve Vairma:*

Thank you, Carl. I'm here to report on today's Day of Action that is taking place throughout the country. First, let me say that the Teamsters local unions throughout the United States are major players in our food supply chain. From those members who are working in the fields, meat-packing plants, to warehouse, bakery, and beverage distribution centers, we're at the forefront of keeping America supplied and fed. Today, many experts predict that the US coronavirus pandemic may last well into – and possibly beyond – 2022.

And with that threat of a second wave of Covid-19 hitting in the fall and winter months this year, the IBT division directors representing members in the food supply chain recommended and have caused a National Day of Action taking place as we speak. These actions are taking place throughout the country, bringing attention to a potential break in our nation's food supply should employers fail to institute the very best practices possible, protecting our members at their work sites. It's important to note that we represent approximately 295,000 food processing beverage, dairy, warehouse distribution, bakery, and food distribution workers at Albertson's, Dairy Farms of America, US Foods, Bimbo Bakery, Cargill Meat Packing Plant, Conagra, Kroger, PepsiCo, and Tyson Foods, just to name a few. Why the Day of Action? To bring attention to our state and federal legislative representatives that a need for action exists and shed light upon our local unions and their members' deep concerns that without their employers' adoption of our recommended best practices or the failure of state and federal government adopting uniform, enforceable safety regulation, the health and safety of our members are increasingly in jeopardy.

Already, a number of our employers are eliminating hazard pay and bonus pay, and they've already renewed their push for increased productivity under the threat of discipline. A number of our employers are laxing social distancing protocols, and are reducing their supplies of proper PPE, leaving it up to employees to provide their own. This is simply unacceptable and is something we need to continue to fight and get enforceable rules and regulations. But the Covid-19 threats to our food processing, production processing, and distribution centers – supply chain experts have expressed concern that labor intensive points in the

food supply chain – including produce, warehouse, and transport workers – will be subject to disruption due to Covid-19. The Food and Environment Reporting Network – FERN – reports that on April 22, 2020 there were 1,950 cases among food process and farm workers.

That cumulative total, on May 19th, was over 16,400 – more than 8-fold increase in less than a month. In that time, at least 66 workers had died of the disease. Covid-19 cases have been reported at 115 meat and poultry processing facilities across 19 states, infecting over 5,000 workers, killing more than 20 workers, and shutting down at least a dozen facilities. Media reports on farms, commercial fruit orchards, commercial greenhouses, vegetable processing plants, and food distribution facilities indicate that these facilities are vulnerable to the Covid-19 disruptions. Several dozen cases have been reported of spontaneous walkouts and sustained sick-outs by grocery distribution, meat processing, and other food processing workers over complaints of unsafe Covid-19 related working conditions.

The IBT Covid-19 food supply chain best practices provides recommendation based on epidemiological and workplace safety best practices for securing the food supply chain, including, one – administration and communications; two – employee protections; three – physical distancing; four – increased paid time off, emergency premium pay and insurance benefits – and five; enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance. Key elements of the guide have been implemented successful via tri-party business, government, and labor-union partnerships in Canada, Germany, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. Why not America? The guide calls for state governments, employers, labor unions, and workers, to work together to shield, test, trace, and treat essential food supply chain workers.

Shielding – meaning providing workers with proper PPE enhanced by in-plant Covid-19 mitigation strategies. Testing – prioritize workers for regular Covid-19 tests. Tracing – prioritize contract tracing by state and health departments for Covid-19 cases at food processing facilities. And treatment – providing workers and members of their households – along with workers who have had close contact with an infected person – would receive cost Covid-19 health care, quarantine pay, and other support. We need to continue our pursuit of these objectives and ensuring that our members receive the safest working conditions possible. And with that, I'll turn it over to Iain Gold from our SRC department.

*Iain Gold:*

Thank you, Steve, and thank you General Secretary Treasurer, Ken Hall, and the other speakers. I just wanted to give a quick update. As Steve mentioned, today is our Day of Action. Through the divisions, their staff, and then, also, the hard work of the staff and the Strategic Research and Campaigns Department, we are pulling off actions at over 30 facilities covering more than 18,000 workers, with the help of 24 – roughly 24 different local unions around the country. From workers in the vegetable and salad processing and packing fields in California, to warehouse workers and dairy workers, bakery workers all over the country highlighting various issues that they either have with their employers or what their employers are struggling to provide, given some unfair competition where non-union employers in those same sectors aren't maintaining any standards.

So, again, our Day of Action is meant to put a marker out there, raise awareness that we need to protect food workers to save America's food supply chain. And that's the message on our banners. You can follow much of this on Teamster.org website, and we've got a couple of national articles from *Bloomberg*, the *LA Times*, and other regional newspapers, and there'll be a lot more reporting coming out from the various activities that we have going on today in many of those local press reports. So, again, I just wanted to – again, this is our initial Day of Action to raise awareness about the critical role that workers play in the food supply chain and that we do need all levels of government to come into play here to help create industry-wide solutions along the lines that Steve just mentioned. So, I just want to thank our staff.

I have a tremendous staff that have been out working very hard – not only contacting the local unions, but also getting the materials produced, and then, just the support of the IBT in general – from Communications Department, to various divisions of getting those materials in the hands of the local unions. Again, our ability to help on the ground has been hampered due to travel restrictions, but again, local unions are stepping up and we encourage local unions to continue to step up as we carry this campaign forward until we know that our workers – our members – are protected. I'll hand it back to you, Steve – or General Secretary Treasurer Hall, I think.

*Ken Hall:*

Okay. Well, thank you – thank all of you for those reports. I mean, it's very useful information and it really demonstrates that – how many people that we have is working so hard to make sure that we are protecting our members on the job. And also, on the call, with

all of our locals, thank all of you – our locals, our joint councils, our members – who have done such a tremendous job in protecting and serving our members across the country. It is just incredible.

Our staff at the IBT has done a tremendous job so, I'm incredibly proud of the Teamsters Union for what we've done during this crisis. There is one thing – one note that I have to make – and that is for the rally that Marcus is talking about – and people are gonna meet at the building – unfortunately, because of the restrictions in Washington D.C., we are not allowed to open the building. So, we wish we could, but when you are there, you should know that we are not allowed to open the building. So, people won't be able to go inside. Hopefully, we can do some things like get some water out and some things to help our folks.

So, with that, remember that we are now doing these calls every other week so, we will be talking with all of you in two weeks. In the meantime, stay safe. Thank you very much.

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